



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

TEN INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH IMPORTING HUNDREDS OF POUNDS OF COCAINE AND HEROIN INTO THE UNITED STATES ABOARD CRUISE SHIPS

MIAMI — Marcos Daniel Jiménez, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida; Keith Perniciaro, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and Robert J. Joura, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, announced today that ten (10) individuals, Jacqueline Martin, O'Neil McLean, Paulette Lawrence, Antonio Valentine, Valentine Lynch, Terry Brown, Ashley Thornton, Richard Flowers, Lancelot Steele, and Dervin Blackburn have been charged in a nineteen (19) count Indictment with conspiracy to import and importing hundreds of pounds of cocaine and heroin into the United States aboard cruise ships in the Caribbean from September 1998 through April 2004. If convicted, all of the defendants face a maximum statutory sentence of life in prison. Two of the defendants, Terry Brown and Jacqueline Martin, were arrested on Thursday and were arraigned and ordered detained pending trial.

The Indictment was issued by a Miami federal grand jury and was unsealed yesterday, June 9. According to the Indictment, the conspiracy was led by a group of Jamaicans, and extended from September 1998 through April 2004. Members of the conspiracy included employees of cruise lines, passengers on cruise ships, and the organizers of the smuggling operation.

The Indictment follows a two (2) year investigation that resulted in the arrest and conviction of over forty (40) individuals, as well as numerous seizures of cocaine and heroin. These seizures include: (1) the September 15, 2002 seizure of 33 pounds of cocaine off the M/S Disney Magic in Key West, Florida; (2) the seizure of 83 pounds of cocaine on November 11, 2002 off the M/S Norwegian Majesty in Miami, Florida; (3) the November 29, 2002 seizure of 22 pounds of cocaine off of the M/S Summit in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida; (4) the December 20, 2002 seizure of 2 pounds of heroin and 5 pounds of cocaine off of the M/S Summit in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida; (5) the February 11, 2003 seizure of 68 pounds of cocaine off of the M/S Summit in Key West, Florida; (6) the April 20, 2003 seizure of 132 pounds of cocaine, as well as significant quantities of crack cocaine and heroin, off of the M/S Norwegian Sea in St. Thomas, in the United States Virgin Islands; and (7) the seizure of 30 pounds of cocaine on April 8, 2004 off of the M/S Zenith, in Key West, Florida.

In all, during the course of the investigation, forty-five (45) individuals, in addition to the ten (10) named in the Indictment unsealed today, have been charged with conspiring to transport large quantities of cocaine and heroin aboard cruise ships based in South Florida and traveling throughout the Caribbean. The individuals previously indicted as part of this conspiracy include: Patrick Rose, Paul Patterson, Oraine Selvin, Errol McKenzie, Andre Dougan, Mitchell Wallace, Jacqueline Flores, Lamonica Pegram, Clinton Ellis, Josie Webster, Maribel Ramos, Michael Croney, Gwendolyn Rico, Jeanne Ruffin, Elease Highsmith, Michelle Burroughs, Clemisha Honeycutt, Deana Honeycutt, Barbara Walker, Tanisha Walker, Carey Lee Williams, Theza Ferguson, Paul Hird, Noel Roberts, Jasmine Dukharan, Henry Fisher, Yvonne Wells, Priscilla Reyes, Deanna Reese, Jeane Hall, Charlton Steele, Nadine Willis, Melissa Peak, Venris Clarke, Christopher Brown, Ainsworth Tulloch, Edwin Murphy, Lloyd Baugh, Ayana Smith, Sarah Kraveski, Patricia Mays, Eunice Stuart, Kenneth Gray, Hopeton Powell, and Richard Fontenot.

The current Indictment revolves around the seven (7) seizures of narcotics set forth above, as well as hundreds of pounds of cocaine carried aboard at least twenty (20) other cruises, including cruises aboard the M/S Disney Magic of Disney Cruise Lines, the M/S Horizon of Celebrity Cruise Lines, the M/S Zenith of Celebrity Cruise Lines, the M/S Millenium of Celebrity Cruise Lines, the M/S Enchantment of the Seas of Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, the M/S Nordic Empress of Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, and the M/S Norwegian Sea and the M/S Norwegian Majesty of Norwegian Cruise Lines. During these cruises, conspirators smuggled cocaine, heroin, and crack strapped to their bodies onto the cruise ships in Aruba, St. Maarten, Panama, and Curacao. In total, fifty-five (55) individuals have been charged during the course of the investigation.

Mr. Jiménez commended the outstanding investigative efforts of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Drug Enforcement Administration in this Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force case. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David Gardey.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.